The

THOREAU SOCIETY

BULLETIN

The Thoreau Society, Inc. is an informal gathering of students and followers of Henry David Thoreau. Herbert H. Uhlig, Winchester, Mass., President; Mrs. Chas. MacPherson, Acton, Mass., Vice-President; and Walter Harding, State Univ., Geneseo, N.Y., 14454, Secretary-Treasurer. Annual membership $2.00; life membership, $50.00. Address communications to the secretary.

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HENRY IN THE DESERT by Eugenia Zeitlin

Three thousand miles away from Concord, Massachusetts, on the edge of the Mojave Desert in California, I met Henry David Thoreau once again.

Years before I had read Walden in college where I awakened when the instructor related how Henry had thrown away three pieces of limestone because he had to spend several minutes dusting them. I made a note to come back to Walden and to read it with care when there was more of Henry's time.

That occasion came during one of the busiest periods of any woman's life. I was the mother of four children under ten. My husband was principal of the town high school, and, like me, a transplanted New Yorker. The few community shopping centers in the quiet desert town held no surprises to this big city girl after a few visits. So I subscribed to The Sunday New York Times and looked forward to Thursdays when the paper was delivered. I started making small purchases from the ads giving me the pleasure of watching for the U. S. mail truck on other days of the week.

Los Angeles was seventy-five miles away. To get there we drove a tortuous two hour route over the mountains, a trip I never once attempted alone during the entire time we lived in Antelope Valley. Our family excursions where limited to the holidays, trips that ended with the children sleeping in the back of the station wagon while my husband maneuvered his way on the narrow mountain road hazy with fog.

The air-conditioned ranch house we owned was at the edge of the housing development. Over the brick wall that enclosed our lot was a vast stretch of desert. To the west mountains of blue and purple were always visible in this smogless area of Southern California. Except for our lawn and the lawns of our neighbors little greenery was evident. California houses, however, added a touch of color to the landscape. Mountain plum, white, barn red, pink, and avocado, they were man-made flowers that bloomed in this desert. At night rabbits darted across the street, frightened by the headlights of passing cars.

During the Eisenhower Fifties the valley was the home of the jet. Astronauts still receive part of their training at Edwards Air Force Base nearby. Aircraft companies then and today test experimental planes over the Mojave, and all day long explosions shatter the hot afternoons each time the sound barrier is broken. We soon became accustomed to the planes. But I, unlike the rest of my family, never stopped hearing the wind which blew through most of the days and much of the night, a howling sound that reminded me of my childhood's purgatory. The wind's intensity appeared to magnify when one sat on the toilet, for directly above was the TV antenna, and that vibrated in the wind.

Thoreau was not acquainted with the desert as far as I know, but I am sure that had he lived in Antelope Valley he would have carefully studied the flora and fauna around him. But I, on the other hand, could never learn to love the barren earth or even to tolerate it. I dreamed of green places, woods and streams and snow and the white houses of New England seen in the pages of Yankee magazine.

That year my husband and I joined a community discussion group. Its members met once a month on a Sunday evening. At each meeting one member presented a paper on a significant person, movement, or philosophy. Anticipating my Sunday evening, I remembered Thoreau, decided to reread Walden and to summarize Henry's contributions to contemporary society.

At that time his voice was just beginning to be heard in our country. The militant civil rights movement, following the Supreme Court Decision of 1954, was well underway. Martin Luther King was using passive resistance in Montgomery and at lunch counters in the South. Senator Barry Goldwater was making speeches about too much government. He was a very popular fellow in our valley, old desert rat that he is. In the afternoons, while the two youngest girls slept, I wrote letters to various newsmakers asking if they had read Thoreau and, if so, the extent of his influence upon them. The more I read of Henry the more I realized the significance of his thinking for our time. Answers included a postcard from Norman Thomas, barely legible, stating that although he had not been influenced by the Concordian since Thoreau did not offer any organized solution for the problems of government, he had read his works. Martin Luther King, his secretary wrote from Montgomery, had not only read Thoreau but had very obviously been influenced by him through Gandhi. Barry Goldwater, unfortunately, did not answer my letter. But I did have the pleasure of waiting for his reply during hot afternoons. Anticipation is all.

During these hours I read Walden carefully. As soon as the girls (six months and two years) were asleep, I would take a basket of wash outside and hang it on the taut wire serving as a clothesline parallel to our desert wall. Optimistically, I would then spread a blanket on the concrete patio and sit with my back against the stucco side of our house, a brilliant white in the hot sun. While I underlined passages in Walden, I could also begin a tan. If I lay flat, I could not feel the wind. But invariably, after twenty minutes I could not stand the heat. Once the temperature went up to 114° even though it was still early spring. Heart pounding, perspiration running down the neck of my blouse, I would run in doors and complete the afternoon's reading at the dining room table. Whenever I pick up a copy of Walden, I feel that desert sun and the cool, air conditioned dining room.

For two months this pattern did not vary. After

finishing Walden, I browsed through the criticism of Henry's work obtained through the Los Angeles County Public Library. The afternoons were long then, pleasantly lonely and joyfully silent except for the wind and the planes. The sky was always blue, open and free, streaked with jet trails. Although my four children are all in school now, and my responsibilities for their care are somewhat diminished, I no longer have such solid blocks of hours so fruitfully used. And no longer can I step outside and see unbroken sky and feel hot sunshine.

Eventually I read my paper on Thoreau one Sunday evening in a large, dimly lit living room. My listeners thought of Henry as an eccentric nature boy; they only half heard the quotations bursting with rebellion and radicalism. Some members of the discussion group graduated to become charter members of the local John Birch Society. I wonder if they ever thought of Thoreau as they read the headlines of the late sixties: the peace movement, the campus demonstrations, the black militants?

Finding Thoreau in the desert has been a greening of my America. During my reading period I came upon The Thoreau Society Bulletin and became a member of that international organization. When Thoreau was admitted to the Hall of Fame, all members received an invitation to attend the ceremony honoring him in 1962, the one hundredth anniversary of his death. I was not able to make that journey of three thousand miles, but a few years later when our son was able to drive and anxious to see the country, even with his mother, I traveled to Concord. There on a summer morning in August we walked the edge of Walden Pond, deserted, still and wild to my city eyes, and, yes, green. There was no wind. On the way to the cairn we met others making the same pilgrimage. Mark, our seventeen-year-old, puzzled by my awe but accepting the pond's significance for me, picked up a rock from that large pile left by visitors and secretly smuggled it to me. It now rests on my desk with the words, "Walden Pond, 1967," scratched on it with a felt pen. I dust it infrequently.

Somehow the awfulness of civilization has not changed Concord, the New England town of my dreams, though local residents would hoot at my description. They simply do not know other towns in America. Even during tourist months Concord streets are not really crowded. There is no movie house. No overabundance of hamburger drive-ins, the bloodline of California. I can't remember many neon signs that so frequently punctuate the highways west of the Mississippi, certainly none that announces, "Jesus Saves." There is an excellent bookstore and an inn which dates back to pre-Revolutionary days. All the historical houses have friendly guides that I now call "my Concord ladies," and all the rooms have surprise bouquets of wild flowers smelling sweet from the summer fields. And when you walk up Monument Road from the inn to the Old North Bridge and the Battlegrounds, you see hidden behind tall, dark trees, ancient and still in the summer air, big white houses just as you might expect them to be.

Before leaving Concord we paid Henry a visit in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, regretting that we had not brought at the very least a bouquet of flowers to dress the simple grave. Not too far away lies Emerson, the family plot marked as it should be by an elegant granite boulder. Those Concord residents buried here are fortunate to have such good company, and death itself must not be wholly unpleasant when parades of children, high school marching bands, and local folk walk the cemetery paths on Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, and on Henry's birthday.

Since my first visit to his town, I have become a spiritual citizen of Concord. No matter where we live I subscribe to Yankee magazine, scan its ads each month for that New England farm I dream of owning, and read the Concord Journal. I have a feeling I may never make that permanent and last journey to New England, but perhaps I have lived that life already.

REPORT OF THE WALKING SOCIETY by Mary R. Fenn

One of the most delightful experiences to a Thoreauvian who is also a nature lover is to come across plants which Thoreau mentioned, and in the very same places too. At the outset of the Thoreau brothers' journey on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers, Henry described the many lovely flowers growing along the Great Meadows. He said, "As we were floating through the last of these familiar meadows, we observed the large and conspicuous flowers of the hibiscus..."

Now it would be dramatic for me to tell how I searched for the hibiscus and after many travails discovered it. The truth is I had seen it several times before, a long time ago. But it still is a quiet thrill to take a companion along and not only go directly to the place, but to find it in bloom. It grows in a spongy backwash of the river in an area once owned and beloved by a later naturalist - William Brewster, the famous ornithologist, whose country home, October Farm, is nearby.

That area along the river, and across from the Great Meadows, has a varied terrain with inlets, ponds, woods, open fields and two hills, Balls Hill and David Hill. As we stood near the hibiscus, looking across the water of Tarbell Bay, we would just see the roof of the old 1700 Tarbell House. A great blue heron flapped his way across the farther end of the inlet. Farther along the shore and upstream are the stone foundations of the little shanties which Brewster built where he and his friends would spend the night to be at hand at dawn when the birds rose. There is a stone canoe house, an inclosure with a ring in the wall where he tied his horse, and a small canal where he kept his boat.

Many of Brewster's experiences, as told in his two books, October Farm and Concord River, which are the collected excerpts from his journals, parallel Thoreau's experiences. The story of the woodcock is startingly similar.

And best of all, this area is about to be acquired by the National Government and so preserved for its rich abundance of wild bird life.

A THOREAU QUIZ by Edwin Way Teale

Here are the answers to Edwin Teale's quiz in the last bulletin. How did you fare?

1. $1.50. Photostat of Concord Tax Records.
2. Slow. Sixty beats a minute. Journal, VIII, Page 217. (All references are to WALDEN ED.)
3. $.25. Familiar Letters, Page 182.
4. Ten. Louise Koopman, "The Thoreau Romance," in Hicks THOREAU IN OUR SEASON, p. 98.
5. $8.00. Journal, VI, Page 166.
6. Yes. The journal has never been found. A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers, Page 354.
7. The Maine Woods and Cape Cod. Publisher's notations.
8. Yes. The "poison dogwood" he mentions breaking is the poison sumac. Journal, VII, Page 236.

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9. When a farmer saw Thoreau standing in a pool watching spring peepers he thought it was his father drunk and came out to lead him home. Journal, X, Page 387.
10. Tom Bowline. Journal, IX, Page 393.
11. On occasions, yes, using a clamshell to dip up the water. Journal, XII, Page 268.
12. If rubbed on hands, they took off pine pitch. Journal, IX, Page 321.
13. The hoot of an owl. Journal, XI, Page 378.
14. A hoary bat. Journal, XIV, Page 53.
15. Sweet fern. Journal, XIII, Page 203.
16. A dream he called "rough and smooth" in which he lay on rough, uncomfortable surfaces and then on smooth, comfortable surfaces. Journal, IX, Page 210.

RUTH WHEELER by T. Y. Davis

I made my first visit to Concord in 1950--I had no car then--and Mrs. Wheeler invited me into her home on my first evening in town, happily destroying my misconception that all New Englanders are cold and reserved and hard to know. She insisted that I have Sunday dinner with her and Caleb, and before I left Concord, drove me to many places of interest--to Bateman's Pond, Fairhaven Bay (she was then living at Thoreau Farm, not at Fairhaven), Nine-Acre Corner, White Pond, Flint's or Sandy Pond, Baker Farm, and ever so many other places. At Ministerial Swamp she reached down and plucked a pitcher plant for me. I still have it, pressed between the leaves of one of my copies of WALDEN.

I shall never forget her many kindnesses to me. In my own personal hall of fame she ranks as one of the finest women I have ever met--cordial, warm-hearted, generous, unaffected, easy to know and easy to like, a completely dedicated Thoreauvian, and generous of her time and talents to those of us who shared her love for Henry.

I'm reminded of the time I bought a first edition of WALDEN at Goodspeed's, in 1954. On the flyleaf, written in pencil, are these words: "S. M. Holden, Concord, Mass." The name of "Holden" rang a bell, but I couldn't identify the sound. Not until I looked into my copy of Canby's THOREAU. On page 20 I found the following:

> ...John Thoreau caught his son's imagination as Cynthia never did....His only recorded criticism is noted by Henry in the Journal of March 21, 1856: 'Had a dispute with Father about the use of my making this /maple/ sugar when I...might have bought sugar cheaper at Holden's. He said it took me from my studies. I said I made it my study; I felt as if I had been to a university.'....

Somehow I had the feeling that the S. M. Holden of my first edition was the grocer from whom Henry might have bought a better grade of maple sugar than that of his own experiment. My first thought was to write Ruth Wheeler for possible verification of my own conclusion. Here in part is what she wrote to me:

> I was very much interested in your adventures in scholarship. You were right every step of the way and you would have missed a lot of fun if you had asked me the question five years ago. Actually, I guess I advised Mrs. Ralph Holden to offer that book to Goodspeed's.
>
> I used to buy groceries and supplies from Wolcott and Holden. We drove down town and hitched our horse to one of the wooden posts (covered with tin) supporting a wooden canopy over the sidewalk (directly across the street from the brick-end store on page 10 of Canby). On one side we could fill our wooden kerosene can or buy pails, tubs, wash boards, rakes or lanterns. On the other we could get groceries or order a barrel of flour to be delivered (once a week). On the counter was a shallow wooden box full of rather dark maple sugar in cakes about an inch thick from which they would weigh out whatever you wanted or from which they would break off a small piece as a present for the children who came in with their parents. For maple syrup we melted down the sugar with or without as much water and white sugar as fancy dictated.

Truly she was a remarkable woman, willing to take her time to write me, not only to corroborate my hunch that S. M. Holden was indeed the Holden of Henry's day, but also to give me a brief historical sketch of the Holden family and the grocery-hardware store they operated in Concord.

Whenever I think of Ruth Wheeler, there comes to mind not the authority of Concord's past but rather a plain, simple, highly intelligent woman striding ten paces ahead of me in her sneakers, pointing out Henry's favorite haunts, stopping only to point out and identify some flower or shrub mentioned in his JOURNALS, seemingly possessed of boundless energy--I could never keep up with her on our walks together, nor paddle her canoe as skillfully as she when we boated together on Fairhaven.

A marvelous woman! I admired her, respected her, yes, and even loved her for her unfailing kindness to me down through the years.

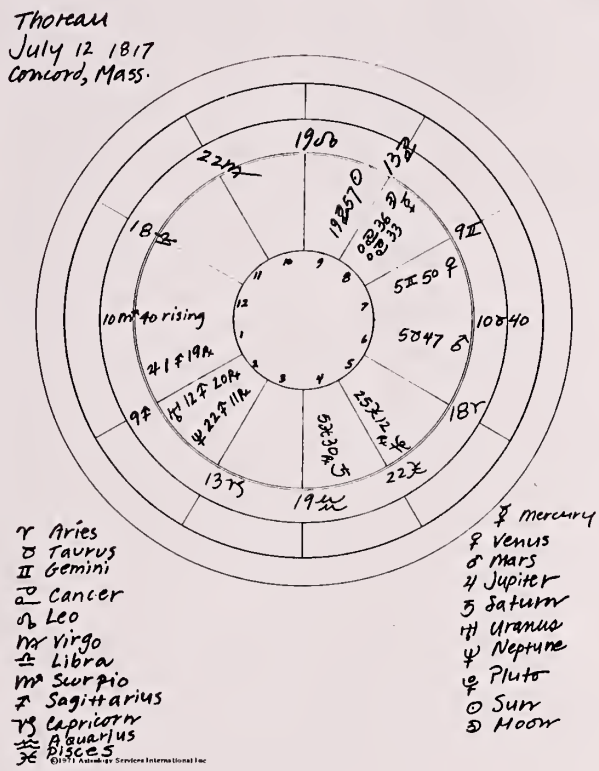
THOREAU - AN ASTROLOGICAL BIRTH*CHART by Julie Winter
/For Editor's comment, see page 8./

The rising sign deals with the way the world views the person. In this case, Scorpio is rising and Jupiter is in the first house. Pluto, the ruler of Scorpio, is in the fifth house. This indicates a person whose force comes through energetic self-containment. There is passionate interest in energy-essence control within the personality. Ideas expand and philosophical beliefs may be exemplified through personal aims. The life unfolds according to principles. This person is formidable and elicits a sharp reaction - favorable or otherwise. The attitude about change and all natural processes of transformation is daring and creative.

Resources are shown, in part, by the second house. This second house is ruled by Sagittarius and Uranus and Neptune are contained within the house. There is a desire to transcend or dissolve the material, an inability to act brilliantly and independently in utilizing the inner resources and defying the accepted norm. There is seeming eccentricity; unstable finances may cause this person to adopt an unusual life-style.

The third house indicates the way a person writes, thinks and speaks; it is the mode of expression and the tempo of communication. It is also indicative of peer group relationships. Here, the chart has Capricorn ruling the third house. This shows little need for peer communication, though the nature is fundamentally compassionate. All activities related to communication are undertaken with extreme seriousness; solitude is necessary for growth and exploration; careful attention is paid to accuracy in observation.

The fourth house deals with the person's subjective view of himself; it is to some extent the measure of individual security. This chart, with Aquarius on the fourth and Saturn in the house, presents a mixed



view. In one respect it shows a person unusually independent and secure in personal attitudes and in another, one who does long battle to break with tradition. Ultimately a strong base is formed which permits some radical stand on a matter of personal (perhaps subjective) importance. The actual home would be isolated and unique.

The fifth house depicts the need to create, to express, to communicate with a group outside the peers (indicated in the third). Here we have Pisces on the fifth house cusp and Pluto in the house. The creative expression is of a basically intuitive or inspirational nature. An urge to work privately, maybe secretly, combines with a talent for going to the depths of the soul and (somehow) analyzing the mysterious. The creative work becomes a journey of exploration; its importance extends beyond the boundaries of the individual life. Creativity is linked to the resources of the self as opposed to the resources of others.

The sixth house relates to work, responsibilities of a daily nature and one's attitude toward health. Aries rules the sixth house and Mars is in Taurus in the sixth, indicating that the appetite for work is enormous; the energy abiding, unfailing. Intrusions on the daily order of things are not welcome and are dealt with briskly. An interest in the growth process, rather than the end product may manifest as great patience about whatever daily routines are chosen.

In the seventh house we look for indications about one-to-one relationships. Taurus is on the cusp and Venus (in Gemini) is in the house. The seventh house also symbolizes the way we see other people. In this chart, the seventh house alone shows a desire for human contact of an enduring nature. In contact would be most readily stimulated on an intellectual level. Because of the square aspect from Venus to Uranus, this man sees relationships in an unusual, unorthodox way. There is a tendency to insist on arranging relationships so that they exist on his terms. His view of others may be determined intellectually rather than emotionally. There is skill with words; a love of them; a need for them. Fear of loss of privacy through one-to-one relationships.

The eighth house shows a crisis in energy - it is a point of transformation. Gemini rules the eighth house, Mercury and the Moon are in the house in Cancer. There is an emotional and intellectual affinity for all areas of the life process which embody change and transformation. A mind largely intuitive and persistent - if apparently moody. The emotional reaction is self-protective. Growth is accomplished through exploration of life-energy in its various forms.

Through the intense observation of the eighth house comes the developed philosophy in the ninth. The ninth house reveals one's philosophy (or religion) and it is ruled, in this chart, by the sign of Cancer. The house contains the Sun. This indicates that the entire framework of the life is oriented toward a particular philosophy, and this regulates many other activities in the life. This is a person who could be sought out - against his will - as a leader.

In the tenth house, we see the way the world judges a person; it is a house dealing with authority. In this chart it is ruled by Leo, symbol of natural authority. There is no desire for authority over others, but there is also an unwillingness to have others act in authority. This is the chart of a person who wishes to be judged on the basis of his beliefs, if he wishes to be judged at all.

The eleventh house (groups of people; what one wishes for oneself; lifestyle) and the twelfth house (the subconscious; the fantasy life; that which is hidden) are ruled by Virgo and Libra respectively. In terms of the eleventh house, a quiet lifestyle is described: one occupied with sharp analysis of everyday events and the sacredness of small acts. The twelfth house may manifest as a subconscious need for one-to-one communication. This need could be satisfied through writing - the ruler of the twelfth in Gemini, a sign which frequently deals with the written word.

*Chart is from "An Astrological Who's Who," by Marc Penfield - ($10) Arcane Publications, York Harbor, ME 03911.

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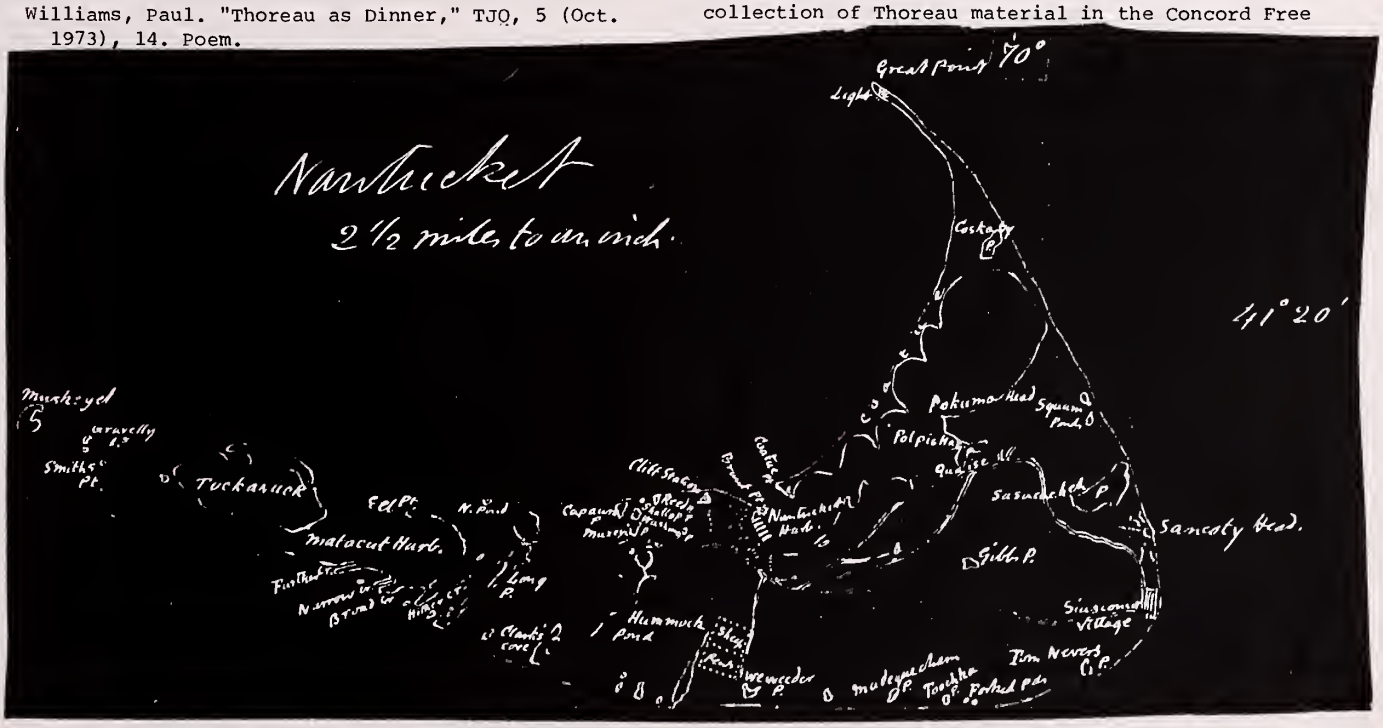
We are indebted to the following for information used in this bulletin: J.Atkins,H.Adel,M.Ames,W.Bottorff, T.Bailey,G.Boudreau,P.Clarkson,M.Campbell,J.Donahue, J.Donavan,R.Epler,F.Flack,M.Ferquson,M.Fenn,M.Flak, H.Gottschalk,B.Gatewood,B.Gronewald,R.Jones,E.Johnson, D.Kamen-Kaye,A.Kovar,K.Kasegawa,J.Michel,R.Needham, P.Oehser,R.Porter,R.Robbins,R.Schaedle,G.Spiotta,A. Small,C.Seib,E.Teale,A.Volkman, and T.Yamasaki. Please keep the secretary informed of items he has missed and new items as they appear.

THOREAU AND A MAP OF NANTUCKET

On Christmas Day 1854 Henry Thoreau traveled to New Bedford to visit Daniel Ricketson. As recorded in his Journal (volume VII), he left on the twenty-seventh for Hyannis on Cape Cod where he boarded the steamer to Nantucket where he was to lecture. The passage of three hours was "rather rough." Thoreau stayed at the Ocean House and it is here that he made some notes from William Coffins' 1834 map of the town.

The following day he went to Siasconset by carriage and described the pine plantation he visited in considerable detail as well as mentioning flowers and shrubs. The lighthouse at Sankaty (spelled by Thoreau Sankoty) interested him, and he also examined the South Sea exhibits at the Atheneum. His interest in Indians is evident in his note in the Journal that the last one on the island had died only that month and Thoreau mentions seeing a picture of him with a basket of huckleberries in his hand. On December 29th he began the return trip to Concord at 7:30 in the morning. The steamer Massachusetts (161 feet long, 23 feet six inch beam) was lost in the fog for a time on the voyage to Hyannis.

The map of Nantucket in Thoreau's hand is from the collection of Thoreau material in the Concord Free



Public Library and is printed with their kind permission. The map was traced from one drawn by William Mitchell in 1838. Mr. Edouard Stackpole, the Director of the Peter Foulger Museum in Nantucket to whom I am indebted for information in this article, writes that the Mitchell map was "the first accurate delineation of Nantucket since the famous DeBarres chart of the previous century. William Mitchell was the father of the famous woman astronomer, Maria Mitchell, and he was a teacher and scientist in his own right, later being elected a Fellow at the Harvard Observatory."

Thoreau's interest in the geography of Nantucket is also clear in his noticing that the gradual rise in the land from Tom Never's Head northward to (John) Gibbs' Swamp conceals the village of Nantucket. Thoreau mentions reading Obed Macy's History of Nantucket, first published in 1835. Mr. Stackpole noted in his letter that "Two of the landmarks in the Town which Thoreau visited are still very much a part of the scene--the Atheneum Library and the Ocean House hotel, now the Jared Coffin House. Also the Sankaty Lighthouse still stands on its bluff on the east side of the Island."

University of Canterbury Robert Stowell

THOREAU AND MARY AUSTIN by Barbara Anderson

I have recently come across a reference to Henry David Thoreau in Earth Horizon, the autobiography of Mary Austin. Mrs. Austin has been out of style for some time but is coming back "in" now that Indians are so "in."

In the second section of her book, she discussed the problems of an intellectually curious young girl growing up in the rigidly structured midwestern society of Carlinville, Illinois, in the 1880's. When she was a child, her family had lived on the outskirts of town, and she had enjoyed private excursions into the nearby woods and fields. By the time she was a teen-ager, they had moved to the center of town, putting much of the wonderful outdoors beyond the reach of a proper young lady. Her mother

> had taken pains to impress upon her the childish character of her interest in nature and the inexpedience of talking about it. Especially you must not talk appreciatively about landscapes and flowers and the habits of little animals and birds to boys; they didn't like it. If one of them took you walking, your interest should be in your companion, and not exceed a ladylike appreciation of the surroundings, in so far as the boy, as the author of the walk, might feel himself complimented by your appreciation of it. You must not quote; especially poetry and Thoreau. An occasional light reference to Burroughs was permissible, but not Thoreau. A very little experience demonstrated that /her mother/ was right. You gathered that outdoors as a subject of conversation was boring to most people.1

Perhaps you are already familiar with this reference, but it is an interesting discovery for me. The whole autobiography is interesting and amazing, considering it was written by a woman whose adult life extended from the 1880's to the 1930's. She chaffed under male dominance but fits my theory that the most liberated women do not meet and march, they "do." It is also a wordy book and deteriorates badly at the end. But it explains a woman who could write Land of Little Rain, a beautiful description of California's Sierra Slope that any Thoreauvian can appreciate.

1 Mary Austin, Earth Horizon (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1932), p. 112.

1974 ANNUAL MEETING. . . .

The annual meeting of the Thoreau Society will be held on Saturday, July 13th, as usual, in Concord, Mass. Speaker of the Day will be Raymond Adams. Herbert Uhlig will deliver the presidential address. Mary Fenn will lead a walk and Robert Needham will conduct a tour of Concord houses. In the evening it is hoped that there will be a showing of the new BBC documentary on Thoreau. Full details of the meeting will be given in the spring bulletin.

The nominating committee has not turned in its report as yet. Suggestions for nominations may be sent to the committee chairman, Ralph Chapman (67 Main St., Brattleboro, Vt.) or presented from the floor at the meeting.

NOTES AND QUERIES. . . .

According to the Wilmington, De., MORNING NEWS for Aug. 28, 1973, when Joanne Vernon and Brian Becker were recently married on the banks of the Brandywine River, they included quotations from Thoreau in their ceremony.

Incidentally, how many weddings have been held at Walden Pond? We quite accidentally witnessed one last summer. Our friend Charles Heinle (who is writing a novel about Thoreau) married his Beverly there at 8 a.m. on Christmas morning 1973. And we've heard of others.

And to go from the sublime to the ridiculous--has anyone ever run into any limericks on Thoreau?

The Kimberly-Clark Corp. of Neenah, Wisc. are now selling a new grade of paper called "Thoreau Vellum" "because of an obvious tie-in with the love of nature by Henry David Thoreau and the concern of Kimberly-Clark to be as effective as possible in utilizing and re-utilizing those products of nature so bountifully bestowed upon us," says their sales manager. A promotion booklet for it, entitled "Infinity" is filled with quotations from Thoreau and under "Credits" says, "Copywriter: Henry David Thoreau." Someone at Kimberly-Clark apparently thought Henry had company at the pond, because many of the photographs feature nude maidens sitting in the trees.

The new BOCES secondary education center in Yorktown Heights, N.Y. is names "Walden" and students read quotations from the book at its dedication.

Advertisements for Pendleton wool shirts read, "The classic shirt for a man at ease. Thoreau, today." A new book of photographs published by the Sierra Club is titled with an unusually long quotation from Thoreau: "A town is saved, not more by the righteous men in it than by the woods and swamps that surround it"!

A souvenir map sold at the Colonial Inn in Concord features a picture of Thoreau with the following misquotation: I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to affront only the essential facts of life. . ."!

The sale of back bulletins continues--10 assorted issues for $1.00, 20 for $2.00, and a bonus of an early booklet or reprint thrown in with 50 for $5.00. Send orders to your secretary.

The real name of singer Bobby Darin (who died on Dec. 20, 1973) was Walden Robert Cassotto, supposedly reflecting his father's interest in Thoreau. But since Darin often described his father as "a small-time gangster" we wonder at the connection.

The Concord Summer Seminars are planned again for

the summer of 1974--"Thoreau" from June 24 to July 13; "Thoreau's Contemporaries" from July 15 to August 2. For details, write your secretary.

Sister Suzanne Carroll has a dissertation in progress at Indiana University on symbolic patterns in A WEEK.

An article in the Nov. 8, 1973 NEW YORK TIMES on building a $50;000 house in Branford, Conn., is entitled "Following Thoreau's Urging, They Built the House Simply."

MORE DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS ON THOREAU. . .

With the permission of the University of Microfilms of Ann Arbor, Mich., we continue printing herewith reproductions of abstracts of dissertations on Thoreau. The full dissertations are available from University Microfilms at the prices given at the ends of the abstracts:

ANNALS AND PERENNIALS: A STUDY OF COSMOGONIC IMAGERY IN THOREAU

(Order No. 70-11,346)

David George HOCH Ph.D.
Kent State University, 1969

Director: Howard P. Vincent

The focus of this dissertation is on Thoreau's use of Oriental cosmogonic imagery as it relates to the process of artistic creation. Although a few critics have pointed out parallels between Thoreau's works and Oriental thought, most of this criticism deals with Thoreau's interest in yoga. The exotic connotations of the word *yoga* and the lack of adequate documentation of Thoreau's reading have led to limited acceptance for this criticism.

Thoreau read a number of works about the philosophy and mythology of the Orient. Since Thoreau was an artist, he was preoccupied with the process of artistic creation. Hence he was interested in philosophical and mythological accounts of the cosmogony. The books that Thoreau read about yoga point out the relationship between cosmic creation and the realization of the yoga. Since the esthetics of this asceticism coincided with Thoreau's own preoccupation, he was not repelled by its exotic origin.

The basis of this dissertation is the nineteenth century books that Thoreau made notes on. Chapter I gives some of the background of Thoreau's knowledge of the Orient as well as a survey of his reading. Since Emerson supplied Thoreau both with enthusiasm for the Orient and books about it, this chapter reviews briefly Emerson's interest in Oriental philosophy and mythology, particularly as it is related to Thoreau's reading. A comparison of the contents of one of Thoreau's commonplace books, heretofore dated after the publication of *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*, with this book shows that he had read five important Oriental works before the publication of his first book. The first chapter concludes with a brief description of Thoreau's notes on Oriental sources and of the sources themselves.

Chapters II, III, and IV deal with Thoreau's adaptation and assimilation of Oriental materials and the resulting influence on his art. Chapter II, "Fables of the Ineffable: The Poet as the Central Man," discusses Thoreau's *A Week* as the mythic journey of the poet to the ubiquitous center of creation. This examination of the structure of the book reveals a number of parallels with the Hindu cosmogony. After Thoreau's persona reaches the destination of his journey, he speaks with the voice of a poet-as-seer and articulates his esthetics. Chapter III, "Yoga: Creation and Realization," examines Thoreau's attraction to yoga as his attempt to practice a discipline that would allow him to participate in the process of artistic creation. Related to this is a consideration of Thoreau's use of ideas and metaphors representing the past and the vitality of life. These are derived from and are parallel to the Oriental cyclical view of time and the idea of metempsychosis. Chapter IV, "The Wilberforce of the West Indian Province of the Imagination: Creation as Self-Emancipation," is an analysis of Thoreau's use of the Oriental idea of creation as liberation in *Walden* and "Night and Moonlight."

M $3.00 X $9.25 205 pages

THOREAU AND ASTROLOGY

/Editor's Note: We are indebted to John Cage for arranging to have this astrological chart especially written for the bulletin. Many (including your secretary) have as much faith in astrology as they do in Ptolemaic astronomy. But then we've had graphological and Fruedian analyses of Thoreau's character in earlier bulletins that not everyone (maybe not anyone) agreed with. So everyone to his own liking, as the proverbial old maid said when she kissed that cow./

The Middlesex County Commissioners have engaged the firm of Richard A. Gardiner & Assoc., Inc. of Cambridge to undertake a study concerning the restoration & future use of Walden Pond State Reservation. The study, which is now in its third phase, has been conducted in close cooperation with the Walden Pond Restoration Committee. The first phase of the study was an evaluation of the existing condition of the reservation & the identification of major problems. These problems are, principally, the deteriorating site conditions & the patterns of use, misuse & overuse that have contributed to these conditions. Stated more simply, the problem to be addressed is the limited capacity of the site, particularly the path around the Pond, to withstand use.

For details, see the entry under Gardiner in the bibliography above.

by Annie Dillard

"it was a favorite habit of Thoreau's to bend over and peer at the landscape through his legs..."

--Walter Harding,
The Days of Henry Thoreau